



December 2020

the
SPIRIT

Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

A Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Congregation

Light in the Darkness

Dear Salem family,

One of the things I look forward to each year is the first Sunday of Advent when I get to turn on the candles in all the windows of our house. They fill our home with a soft light that makes me feel safe and warm. But what with worship, coffee hour, Sunday Night Alive prep and event, and other activities, I was so busy yesterday I only got around to the ones on the first floor and had to leave the second floor ones for today. And what a day to light candles! It is miserable outside – cold and rainy and as dark as dusk.

As I made my way from room to room, centering the candles in the window, turning on their switches, and replacing their bulbs, I realized there was a musical phrase singing inside of me, "...light in the darkness..." There it was, repeating over and over. And then, like friends walking together, words joined in on either side, and pretty soon the whole refrain was echoing through my mind:

"Way Maker! Miracle Worker! Promise Keeper! Light in the Darkness! My God, that is who You are!"[i]

And then I realized what a perfect song this was for us here in Advent 2020! In the midst of all of the upheaval and uncertainties of our lives in this strangest of years, we long to be able to see our way forward in this long, dark night. We long for someone to snap their fingers and perform a miracle. We long for the assurance that God has not forgotten us. We long for a way out of this wilderness.

But the truth of the matter is that we already know the Way. That Way is Jesus. And we – WE! – are People of the Way! We don't have to wait for a way to be made, because Jesus makes a way for us each moment of our lives. We don't have to wait for a miracle, because miracles are happening all around us all the time. We don't have to wait for God to keep God's promise, because those promises are fulfilled every time we choose faith over fear. And we don't have to wait for light to see – all we need do is ask.

The verses to Way Maker remind us of the overarching Truth of our lives – that God is HERE moving in our midst, working in whatever place we find ourselves,

touching, healing, and mending every heart, and turning our lives around.

And our response to that God moving in our midst? It can only be, "I worship you! I worship you!"

Sure, there are too many times when we may not see God working, we may not feel God working, but even when we can't see it or feel it, the truth is that God never, ever, ever stops working.

If you don't know this song, you can find it right here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJCV_2H9xD0

I encourage you, not just to listen to it, but to pray it. Pray it and let it seep deep into your soul. Pray it until you believe it, not just with your head but with your heart.

In the midst of whatever you are going through, God is right there with you, moving and working in your life, touching, healing, and mending every hurt, your Way Maker, your Miracle Worker, your Promise Keeper, and your Light in the Darkness.

And for that I give God thanks and praise!

Pastor Marjo

[i] CCLI Song # 7115744

Osinachi Kalu Okoro Egbu

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SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604
Phone (203) 336-3300 ▪ Fax (203) 336-8813

Website - www.salembridgeport.org

Facebook - www.facebook.com/SalemBridgeport/

Church Office Hours

Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Worship Services

9:30am Zoom Worship

Salem's Staff

The Rev. Marjo Anderson, Pastor
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Office Phone (203) 336-3300, ext. 10

LEADERSHIP AT SALEM

COUNCIL

Marjo Anderson, Pastor
Ray Anderson, President
Tom Larson, Vice-President
Nancy Headford, Secretary
Rich Kenyon, Treasurer
Liz Bales
Sandra Brown
Judi Nielsen
Emily Sokoloski
Diane Tomasko
Bill Winter

We Are Grateful



Capital Improvements

Joan Crossman (in Memory of Eunice Larson)

Thrivent Choice

Al & Dorothy DeWalt, Rich Lansing

Salem's Seafarers 2020 collection will not require shopping, packaging, and delivery. Instead, contributions can be made directly with a check made out to and sent to:

Ruth Setaro
33 Valley Brook Lane
North Haven, CT 06473

Put "Salem Seafarer Donation" in the note on the check. Pastor Ruth Setaro will send you a thank you card for your records.



Newsletter deadline is the 15th of each month unless otherwise noted in the monthly calendar.


Next deadline date is **December 15th for the **January** issue!**

**Email submissions to
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net**



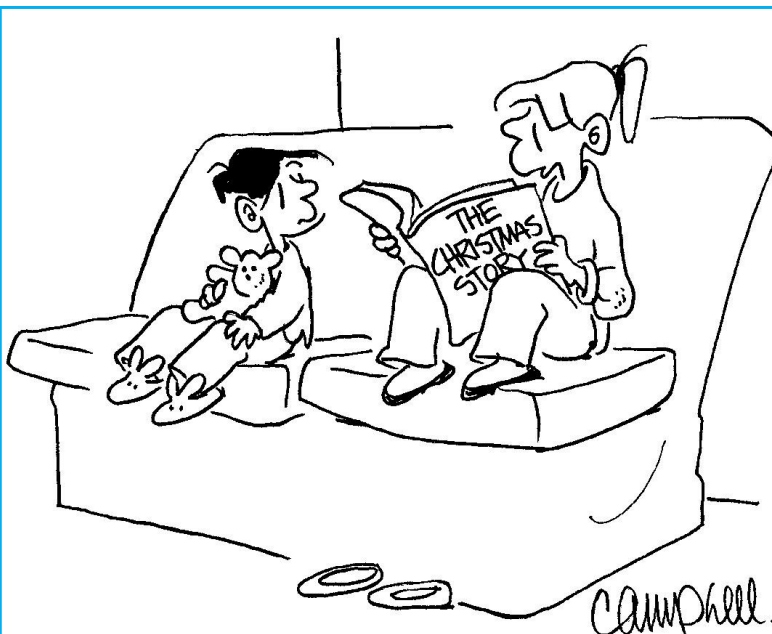
December 2020

Salem Lutheran Church

SUN	MON	TUE Dec 1	WED 2	THU	FRI 4	SAT 5
		● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and	● 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray	● 6pm Genesis Game Night for All	● 6pm God at the Center	
6 Second Sunday in Advent ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries	7 ● 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on /	8 ● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and ● 6pm Stewardship Committee	9 ● 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray	10 ● 6pm Genesis Game Night for All	11 ● 6pm God at the Center	12 ● 8am Men's Breakfast
13 Third Sunday in Advent ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries	14 ● 4pm Southern CT Rostered Leaders Mtg on / ● 6:30pm Social Ministry Committee ● 6:30pm Social Ministry Committee	15 ● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and	16 ● 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray	17 ● 6pm Genesis Game Night for All	18 ● 6pm God at the Center	19 ● 11am Inner-View Chat n Chew
20 Fourth Sunday in Advent ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries	21 ● 6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting ● 7:30pm Salem Executive Committee Meeting	22 ● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and	23 ● 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray	24	25 Christmas Day - Office Closed	26
27 First Sunday After Christmas ● 9:30am Worship ● 10:30am Coffee Hour ● 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church ● 12:30pm New Directions Ministries ● 6pm Sunday Night Alive!	28 ● 7pm Council Meeting	29 ● 9:30am Rostered Leaders' Tuesday Talk and	30 ● 12pm Lord, Teach Us to Pray	31 ● 6pm Genesis Game Night for All		

Bruce Tomasko	1
Ella Kenyon	2
Sue Chrien	3
Elijah Caragol	4
Barbara Howard	7
Ashley Baronavski	8
Dale Danowski	8
Landon Jawarski	13
Susan Murphy	15
Natalie Kenyon	16
Nancy Headford	19
Joseph Roberts	21
Katherine Pytleski	22
James McWain	23
Priscilla Schulz	29
Raymond Anderson	31

Birthdays



"Because they didn't have e-mail then.
That's why God sent an angel
to proclaim the baby's birth."

The following people have asked for
healing, help, guidance or comfort.

Joan B
Barbara B
Sam B
Erick D
Grace D
Hannah & Joseph
Bob H
Dennis H
Sylvitha
Jay
Mike R
Jane M
Jana B
William S
Daphne B
Peter K
Bobby W

Anna
Barbara
James S
Sarah R
Brooks A
Angie
Liz F.
Hazel P
Katherine P

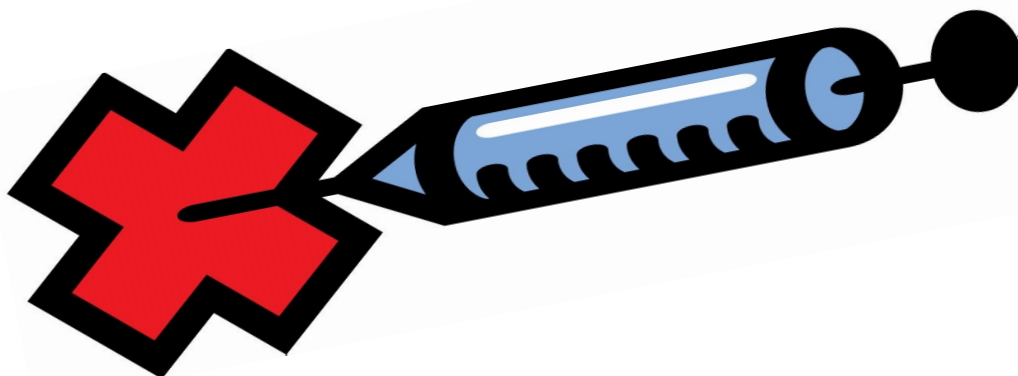


8 Recommended Adult Immunizations

If you are 19 years of age or older please talk to your doctor about receiving the following vaccines. Vaccines are not only for kids and teens. If you are older, you're at a higher risk for certain vaccine-preventable diseases. Vaccines are immunity boosters that help prevent serious diseases at any age.



1. **Influenza Vaccine** - Given annually usually in the fall. Consult your doctor about flu vaccine choices. There are two stronger flu shots for those over 65 years old.
2. **Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis Vaccine (TDAP)** - Recommended for everyone especially with pregnancy. Tetanus and diphtheria (TD) booster is suggested every 10 years. Getting yourself vaccinated can help keep you from spreading pertussis to an infant.
3. **Varicella (Chicken Pox) Vaccine** - 2 doses given if you never had Chicken Pox.
4. **Zoster (Shingles) Vaccine** - given to adults age 50 and older who have had Chicken Pox. Even if you had the older shingles vaccine, you should still get Shingrix. Shingrix is given in two doses 2 to 6 months apart.
5. **Hepatitis B** - 3 doses given to health care workers, people with multiple sex partners, and those under age 60 with diabetes.
6. **Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Vaccine** - Given to those born in 1957 or later.
7. **Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccine** - 3 doses recommended for females and males through the age of 26.
8. **Pneumonia Vaccines** - Recommended for all adults 65 years of age and older. Also recommended if younger than 65 if you smoke, have asthma, diabetes, or a weak immune system. There are two pneumonia vaccines. You should receive the Pneumovax 23 vaccine. Ask your doctor if you should also receive the Prevnar 13 vaccine.



Don't Eat This If You're Taking That

Beware: The foods you eat and medications you take could be working against each other.

If you take blood thinners, avoid fish oil supplements. Large amounts of fish oil (not fish itself) can also thin the blood.

If you take certain statins for high cholesterol, avoid grapefruit and grapefruit juice. Grapefruit interferes with your body's metabolism of certain statins.

If you take medicine for diabetes, avoid too much cinnamon. Cinnamon in large amounts can lower blood sugar.

If you take certain antidepressants, avoid red wine, hard cheese, and chocolate. These foods contain ingredients that can raise blood pressure if you are taking MAOI antidepressants.

If you take certain heart medicines, avoid too much calcium. Too much calcium can work against calcium channel blockers' ability to lower blood pressure.

If you take a certain blood-pressure medicine, do not eat too many bananas and other high-potassium foods. ACE inhibitors which lower blood pressure can boost potassium retention. Eating too many foods containing potassium may cause harmful effects.



Eat This, Not That

10 Foods are estimated to cause nearly half of all US deaths from heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes each year.

Deaths From Eating Too Few:

- Nuts/Seeds
- Seafood Omega-3's
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Whole Grains
- Polyunsaturated Fats

Deaths From Eating Too Much:

- Sodium
- Processed Meat
- Sugary Beverages
- Unprocessed Red Meat

September 18, 2020

The Rev. Marjo Anderson
Salem Lutheran Church
3160 Park Ave
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Dear Salem,

When the global pandemic collided with systemic racism and the resulting lockdown plunged even more of our neighbors into desperate poverty this summer, the biggest temptation was to give in to being overwhelmed.

Bridgeport is a city of 148,000 with a 21% poverty rate, where 100% of our school children are eligible for free lunches. Our community is plagued with the poor health that comes from working too hard – or not at all – and lack of access to healthy food, making residents particularly vulnerable to the coronavirus. The gun and domestic violence that arise from entrenched stress and poverty are all too common on our streets and in our homes.

What do you do when, on top of all that, an invisible threat closes our schools, chokes off jobs, forces people to spend too much time together in inadequate housing, and no-one can say exactly what the end-game looks like and when it will come?

In your case, as a supporter of the CCGB, you did a great deal. I want to make sure you know how much difference you made, and encourage you to keep going.

Many of those struggling to keep afloat and make a better future in Bridgeport felt your love and support this summer. Thank you – and please stay close to us as we continue to fight this pandemic and move from dispensing charity to working for justice.

Your faithful support enabled us to:

- Provide hundreds of freshly-prepared meals to families during the school shutdown. Graduates of our culinary program were employed to prep the meals, and diners could also purchase fresh food and produce from us using SNAP dollars. We worked with the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care



Foundation to provide good food to our 30 partners in the Hunger Outreach Network, helping to meet surging need.



- Make a fast start on our laptop program for the 90 kids we support through the Janus Center for children at risk. When children in the affluent school districts all around Bridgeport were heading home for distance learning with school-provided laptops, Bridgeport kids were often without both hardware and internet access. Thanks to Wes Johnson and Addy Garcia at the Janus center and many donors like you, we now have 90 laptops with hotspots and internet access to loan to the youth referred to Janus Center so they don't continue to suffer from the digital divide which has set so many students back.

- Advance positive relationships and dialogue across racial and theological lines about white privilege and racial justice. In the last three years we have helped differing congregations come together for candid conversations about their experiences of racism. We encouraged more of those conversations with our five part 'Raising the Bar: Becoming Anti-Racist' series. More than 180 people joined the discussion of Jerome Tisby's 'Color of Compromise' and we're building that into an ongoing dialogue.



Some years ago, when I was struggling to come to terms with the cruel and seemingly random political and material forces that derail the lives of good people, a wise mentor told me: *"God doesn't call us to be successful, God calls us to be faithful."* I try to live that mission every day and I'm so encouraged by the fact that you live it with me through your support for CCGB. Please call me at any time if you would like to know more about the many, many actions we are taking on behalf of brave children and adults who are fighting overwhelming odds to live, laugh and thrive during these incredibly challenging times.

In God's grace,

Cass

Cass L. Shaw
President & CEO

Thank you!



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

Witness at the Border

Energy flows to a congregation when it's involved in an invaluable ministry among God's people. That's the case for *Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey*, El Paso, Texas. Situated near the border with Juárez, Mexico, the congregation has found purpose in accompanying Latin American migrants and offering visitors border immersion experiences, said Rose Mary Sánchez-Guzmán, its pastor.

Their Lutheran faith inspires their work. "[The migration crisis] is what I believe Christ is putting in front of us," she said. "This is urgent."

"Spiritually, it has changed our congregation."

For two Tuesdays each month, *Cristo Rey* opens its doors to receive migrants. The congregation feeds them and provides them with overnight shelter and an opportunity to call their families so they can buy a bus or plane ticket to get to their court date on time. By Friday, most visitors are gone. In the interim period, the congregation works to educate its community about immigration issues and migrant rights. "Asylum seekers are legal in [this] country ... they have the right to ask for asylum," Sánchez-Guzmán said. "They are legal

Immersion program participants meet undocumented migrants, U.S. Border Patrol officers, immigration lawyers and others involved in border culture. Through the chain-link fence on the border, they listen as their Mexican neighbors share their joys and challenges.

"Spiritually, it has changed our congregation," she said, adding that although *Cristo Rey* is small and its members aren't wealthy, they've generously opened their hearts to their migrant neighbors. *The congregation receives an annual grant, funded by Mission Support from the Rocky Mountain Synod and the churchwide organization, to bolster outreach.*

Cristo Rey also finds support as a member of the ELCA Welcoming Congregations Network, an initiative of the ELCA's AMMPARO strategy (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities). There are 112 ELCA congregations involved.

"Jesus told us to help," said Sánchez-Guzmán of *Cristo Rey*. "He didn't say just help people with documents. He just says feed the hungry and clothe the naked."



Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey, El Paso, Texas, is a member of the ELCA Welcoming Congregations Network. Your Mission Support gifts fund this congregation's ministry.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

ELCA GLOBAL LINKS

Stay informed. Be inspired. Get involved.

ELCA Companion Synod Global Connections

This spring the South Dakota Synod requested a prayer call with its companion, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon (ELCC), and invited the Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, another companion synod of the ELCC, to participate. Via Zoom, Bishops Constanze Hagmaier and Jason Zinko of North America, as well as the Rev. Karen Ressel, companion-synod coordinator and pastor serving on the Pine Ridge

Reservation in South Dakota, met on June 3 with Bishop Ruben Ngozo of the ELCC to share news of how the different nations – the United States, Canada, Oglala Lakota and Cameroon – are coping with COVID-19, and to pray for one another and the world. Shared concerns were lifted up and the parties gave thanks for relationships that sustain us during challenging times.



Left to right: (top row) Bishop Jason Zinko, ELCIC Manitoba/Northwest Ontario; Bishop Constanze Hagmaier, ELCA South Dakota Synod; the Rev. Karen Ressel, companion synod coordinator and pastor serving on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota; (bottom row) the Rev. Ruben Ngozo, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon (ELCC); and Anne Langdji, Global Mission regional representative serving in Cameroon. (Photo: Sawyer Vanden Heuvel)



The ELCA Companion Synod Network has held two conference calls with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) since the pandemic began. These calls have connected the network to hear stories of Lutheran health care ministry in Tanzania, consider reports on the pandemic inside Tanzania and assess the ELCA's response, both bilaterally (between synod and dioceses) and across Tanzania. The network has also been updated on both the ELCT's and the Tanzanian government's response to the pandemic.

Dr. Stephen and Jodi Swanson's personal protective equipment (PPE) ministry in Arusha, Tanzania.